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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR PRM/A - RUSCH AND NORONHA, NEA/ARN AND NEA/NGA

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SUBJECT: INS-APPROVED IRAQI REFUGEES AWAITING SAO CLEARANCE  
FACE INCREASING PRESSURES AND DIFFICULTIES IN JORDAN

Classified By: DCM Greg Berry, per 1.5 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) AS REQUESTED BY PRM/A, THIS IS A BRIEF UPDATE  
ABOUT THE INCREASING PRESSURES AND DIFFICULTIES REPORTED IN  
THREE INS APPROVED REFUGEE CASES (13 PERSONS), PENDING THEIR  
SAO CLEARANCE. WE NOTE THAT, WHILE THE APPLICANTS THEMSELVES  
ARE THE PRIME SOURCE OF INFORMATION IN TWO CASES, UNHCR AMMAN  
HAS CONFIRMED THE SITUATION OF THE THIRD, AND EXPRESSES  
CONCERN ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF IRAQI REFUGEES MORE  
BROADLY AS REGIONAL TENSIONS RISE.

¶2. (C) ONE OF THE CASES, JO-000626, WAS APPROVED IN THE JULY  
2001 INS MISSION AND WAS READY FOR TRAVEL IN SEPTEMBER 2001.  
NEW PROCEDURES IMPLEMENTED AFTER 9-11 REQUIRED US TO RESUBMIT  
HIS SAO REQUEST AND JO-000626 HAS BEEN PENDING EVER SINCE.  
DUE TO HIS LONG STAY IN JORDAN, JO-000626 CLAIMS THAT HE IS  
KNOWN TO THE IRAQI INTELLIGENCE SERVICES. AS A RESULT, HE  
HAS TO KEEP A VERY LOW PROFILE AND RARELY LEAVES HIS HOUSE  
BECAUSE HE BELIEVES IRAQI INTELLIGENCE SERVICES WILL "CATCH"  
HIM IF HE LEAVES HIS HOUSE.

¶3. (C) ANOTHER CASE, JO-000711, CURRENTLY WORKS WITH THE  
IRAQI OPPPOSITION, THE IRAQI NATIONAL ACCORD MOVEMENT (INA, AL  
WIFAQ) HERE IN JORDAN. THESE INDIVIDUALS WHO WORK FOR THE  
INA REPORTEDLY ARE REQUIRED TO SLEEP IN THEIR OFFICES BECAUSE  
THE INA BELIEVES IT IS NOT SAFE FOR THEM TO GO HOME DUE TO  
THE PRESENCE OF IRAQI INTELLIGENCE SERVICES IN JORDAN. THEIR  
CHILDREN DO NOT GO TO SCHOOLS AND THEY HAVE LOCKED THEMSELVES  
IN THEIR HOMES AND CLOSED ALL THE DOORS AND SHUTTERS. ALL  
REFUGEES WORKING WITH THE IRAQI OPPPOSITION (E.G. IRAQI  
NATIONAL ACCORD MOVEMENT) CLAIM THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD BY  
OFFICIALS WITH THE OPPPOSITION TO TRAVEL TO THEIR RESETTLEMENT  
COUNTRIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE REFUGEES REPORT THAT  
THERE ARE OTHER EVENTS OCCURRING BUT THE REFUGEES CANNOT  
DISCLOSE THE INFORMATION OVER THE PHONE AND IT IS UNSAFE FOR  
THEM TO APPROACH AMEMBASSY AMMAN.

¶4. (C) ACCORDING TO UNHCR AMMAN, THE THIRD CASE, JO-000712,  
HAS BEEN "TARGETED" BY IRAQI INTELLIGENCE AGENTS. THE ENTIRE  
FAMILY HAS GONE INTO HIDING AND IS MOVED FROM ONE SAFE HOUSE  
TO ANOTHER ON A MONTHLY BASIS. ONLY THE PROTECTION OFFICER  
AT UNHCR KNOWS THE FAMILY'S EXACT WHEREABOUTS. THE SEVEN  
FAMILY MEMBERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE HOUSE. THEY ARE  
TRYING TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE, WHICH IS PROVING TO BE QUITE  
DIFFICULT.

¶5. (C) UNHCR AMMAN REPORTS THAT THE PRESENCE OF IRAQI  
INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS IN JORDAN PRESENTS A PERMANENT RISK FOR  
IRAQI REFUGEES WHO LIVE IN CONSTANT FEAR OF BEING HARASSED OR  
HAVING THEIR LIVES THREATENED IN JORDAN. IN GENERAL, IRAQI  
INTELLIGENCE CONTINUES TO SURVEIL AND HARASS SOME IRAQI  
REFUGEES HERE IN JORDAN. THEIR ACTIVITIES AND MOTIONS ARE  
CONSTANTLY MONITORED. REFUGEES REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN ATTACKED  
ON THE STREETS AND HAVE HAD PEOPLE COME TO THEIR HOUSES  
SEARCHING FOR THEM. WHEN THE REFUGEES LEAVE THEIR HOUSES,  
THEY ARE ALWAYS LOOKING OVER THEIR SHOULDERS.

¶6. (C) IN ADDITION, ACCORDING TO UNHCR'S MEMORANDUM OF  
UNDERSTANDING WITH THE GOJ, REFUGEES HAVE THE LEGAL RIGHT TO  
REMAIN IN JORDAN ONLY SIX MONTHS AFTER THEY ARE RECOGNIZED AS  
REFUGEES BY UNHCR. AFTERWARDS, THEY RISK BEING SUBJECTED TO  
DEPORTATION TO THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (IN THIS CASE IRAQ).  
ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT HEARD OF ANY CASES OF DEPORTATION OF  
UNHCR-RECOGNIZED REFUGEES, UNHCR IS INCREASINGLY ANXIOUS THAT  
THE GOJ WILL MOVE TO DEPORT RECOGNIZED REFUGEES WHO HAVE  
OVERSTAYED THEIR LEGAL RESIDENCY, PARTICULARLY IF CONDITIONS  
INSIDE JORDAN DETERIORATE.

¶7. (C) FINALLY, INCREASING TENSIONS IN THE REGION ARE  
MAKING THESE 13 INS-APPROVED REFUGEES INCREASINGLY NERVOUS  
ABOUT THEIR FATE. IF WAR WERE TO OCCUR AND THE CURRENT  
REGIME IN IRAQ WERE TO CHANGE, THE REFUGEES WONDER WHETHER  
THEY WOULD BE RESETTLED OR GIVEN THE CHANCE TO RETURN HOME.  
WOULD THEY LOSE REFUGEE STATUS ONCE THE CAUSE FOR FEAR OF  
PERSECUTION IN THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN IS NO LONGER THERE? WE  
WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON THESE QUESTIONS, AS WELL AS  
TIMELY REVIEW OF SAO CLEARANCES FOR THE CASES DESCRIBED ABOVE.  
GNEHM